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LETTER DATED 28 JUNE 1997 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to convey to you the attached letter, dated 27 June 1997, which I have received from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations (see annex). Attached to the letter is the seventh biweekly report on the multinational protection force for Albania, as requested by the Security Council in resolutions 1101 (1997) of 28 March 1997 and 1114 (1997) of 19 June 1997.

I should appreciate your bringing the present letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN

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Annex

Letter dated 27 June 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to submit the seventh report on the multinational protection force for Albania (see appendix), which refers to events up to 25 June. It can be considered the last report submitted pursuant to the requirements set out in Security Council resolution 1101 (1997) of 28 March 1997, and the first report submitted to the Security Council pursuant to the requirements set out in paragraph 9 of resolution 1114 (1997) of 19 June 1997. The sixth such report was conveyed to you on 13 June 1997 (see S/1997/460).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and the seventh report circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) F. Paolo FULCI
Ambassador

Appendix

Seventh report to the Security Council on the operation of the multinational protection force in Albania

I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 28 March 1997, the Security Council adopted resolution 1101 (1997), in paragraph 2 of which it welcomed the offer made by certain Member States to establish a temporary and limited multinational protection force to facilitate the safe and prompt delivery of humanitarian assistance and to help create a secure environment for the missions of international organizations in Albania, including those providing humanitarian assistance.

2. In paragraph 9 of the resolution, the Security Council requested the Member States participating in the multinational protection force to provide periodic reports, at least every two weeks, to the Council through the Secretary-General. The first five reports were provided on 9 and 25 April, 9 and 23 May and 6 June 1997 (see S/1997/440). A sixth report was provided on 13 June 1997 (see S/1997/460), referring to the modalities of the presence of the force after 28 June 1997 and in the light of the assessment of the situation by the Security Council three months after its adoption of resolution 1101 (1997), as foreseen by it in paragraph 6 of the resolution.

3. In that report, the Steering Committee, consisting of the political directors of the troop-contributing countries and the Commander of the operation, having considered the requests by the Albanian authorities that the force remain in Albania during the electoral process to help ensure a safe and secure environment for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) monitoring teams, in the framework of the Security Council's mandate, after consultation with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of OSCE and having considered the operational modalities, recommended that the mandate given to the force by the Security Council in resolution 1101 (1997) be extended for the period necessary for the implementation of the electoral process in Albania, starting on 29 June, and in any event not longer than 45 days after the termination of the previous mandate.

4. On 16 June 1997, the Permanent Representative of Albania to the United Nations addressed a letter to the President of the Security Council requesting the extension of the mandate of the multinational protection force in Albania.

5. On 19 June 1997, the Security Council adopted resolution 1114 (1997), in paragraph 2 of which it welcomed the readiness of the countries contributing to the multinational protection force to maintain their military contingents in Albania for a limited time. In paragraph 3 of the resolution the Security Council welcomed the intention of the countries contributing to the multinational protection force to continue to facilitate the safe and prompt delivery of humanitarian assistance and to help create a secure environment for the missions of international organizations in Albania, including those providing humanitarian assistance. It also took note of all the elements contained in the sixth report on the operation of the multinational protection

force in Albania, concerning, inter alia, the electoral monitoring mission of the OSCE-ODIHR. It decided that the operation would be limited to a period of 45 days from 28 June 1997.

6. In paragraph 9 of the same resolution the Security Council requested the Member States participating in the multinational protection force to provide periodic reports to the Council through the Secretary-General, at least every two weeks, the first such report to be made no later than 14 days after the adoption of the resolution.

7. The seventh report to the Security Council on the operation of the multinational protection force in Albania refers to events up to 25 June. It can be considered the last report submitted to the Council pursuant to the requirements set out in resolution 1101 (1997) and the first report submitted to the Council pursuant to the requirements set out in paragraph 9 of resolution 1114 (1997).

II. MULTINATIONAL PROTECTION FORCE

A. Political guidance

8. The Steering Committee, consisting of the political directors of the 11 troop-contributing countries and the Commander of the operation, continues to follow the overall situation on the ground and the full compliance of the activities of the force with the Security Council mandate. It had meetings on 4, 9, 14, 23 and 30 April, 6, 13, 14 and 22 May and 4, 10, 20 and 25 June 1997. Belgium, having decided to contribute to the force, has participated in the meetings of the Committee as a full member since 10 June 1997.

9. Representatives of the following international organizations have attended the meetings of the Steering Committee as observers, as appropriate: United Nations, OSCE, European Union, Western European Union and International Committee of the Red Cross.

B. Cooperation with Albanian authorities

10. The Albanian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Pavli Zeri, attended the Steering Committee meeting on 25 June 1997 and expressed his appreciation for the excellent cooperation between the Command of the force and the Albanian authorities. He also stressed that the presence of the force being impartial and neutral has contributed to the normalization of the situation of public order, and welcomed the continuation of the force's presence during the electoral process. The Minister for Foreign Affairs reiterated the commitment of the Albanian political parties to cooperate with the multinational protection force and with the OSCE-ODIHR missions during the electoral process and to respect the results of the electoral operations as assessed by OSCE.

C. Cooperation with international organizations

11. The force is helping to create a secure environment for several missions of international organizations active in Albania. In addition to the action taken to facilitate a safe and prompt delivery of humanitarian assistance, the force helps to ensure a secure environment during the electoral process in particular with regard to the OSCE-ODIHR missions, within the framework of the Security Council mandate.

12. On 18 June 1997 the OSCE ministerial troika conducted a thorough assessment of the preparation for the elections in Albania on the basis of reports of Dr. Franz Vranitzky, Personal Representative of the Chairman in Office, and Ambassador Gerard Stoudmann, Director-General of ODIHR. The OSCE troika welcomed the cooperative attitude of the multinational protection force in helping to provide security conditions for all international observers under the OSCE plan and strongly supported the holding of parliamentary elections in Albania on 29 June.

D. Force deployment

13. The force has extended its deployment and acquired further visibility, intensifying reconnaissance and escorting humanitarian convoys. To date, protection has been guaranteed to 310 humanitarian missions. In particular, 192 reconnaissance missions were carried out to assist 116 OSCE missions, 65 non-governmental organizations and 11 on-call missions; 79 convoys to transport humanitarian aid and 29 convoys for technical support operations were organized. Technical support was provided to humanitarian operations such as the anti-polio campaign, targeting 350,000 children, water chlorinization and distribution of teaching equipment. These missions took place in 57 towns or villages in Albania.

14. Transportation of about 4,000 tons of humanitarian aid took place, including 3,221 tons of food, 286 tons of foodstuff for families, 50 tons of foodstuff parcels, 170 tons of seeds, 273 tons of health equipment and 60 tons of various items.

15. For the specific purpose of protecting the OSCE monitoring missions during the electoral process, a limited increase in the strength of the force of about 1,000 units has been considered necessary. In this respect, Italy is deploying 690 additional units, while Greece and Turkey have pledged a company each.

16. In the present phase, the Commander's operational concept provides for the following:

(a) To contribute to securing OSCE monitoring teams in those areas where the force is already deployed, providing patrols on the roads where specific OSCE activities are in progress;

(b) To expand the deployment to support OSCE monitoring teams in the areas of Korce, Shkoder, Peskopi, Berat, Kukes, Pogradec and Sarande with stable or

mobile force presence according to existing operational capabilities and with regard to the general situation;

(c) To provide security escorts, on a case-by-case basis, within existing capability, to specific OSCE teams elsewhere;

(d) To develop a plan to rescue OSCE teams in case of emergency.

17. Protection will therefore be granted to the OSCE monitoring teams, according to the situation, either indirectly, within the enlarged security framework, in most of the country, or directly, providing escorts on a case-by-case basis in the residual part of the country. The force will grant medical assistance within its military compounds, offer accommodation according to existing capabilities and provide communication personnel in order to facilitate links between different OSCE missions and central headquarters. An Italian naval unit has been stationed in Durres since 19 June 1997 for logistic support to the OSCE missions. On a bilateral basis, Italy has responded to OSCE transport needs, strengthening the OSCE mission with 50 vehicles and 70 drivers. Greece has provided 30 vehicles and respective drivers and Austria six vehicles and respective drivers.

III. CONCLUSIONS

18. The situation in Albania remains tense. Several clashes between rival gangs continue to result in casualties, especially in the south of the country. The force has been involved in some incidents. In one case, on 18 June, a Greek soldier, responding to fire aimed at him, was responsible for an Albanian casualty in Elbasan. On the same day, soldiers of the Romanian contingent had to intervene against a gang in Gjirokaster to free 11 OSCE monitors who had been taken hostage. On 20 June, the force had to intervene in Fier to free a humanitarian convoy which had been attacked by an armed gang.

19. The force is committed to help create a secure environment and the best possible conditions for the holding of regular and fair elections. The force is adapting in a flexible way to the requirements set out in Security Council resolution 1114 (1997). A special office has been set up at the force headquarters in Tirana to follow, in cooperation with OSCE and the Albanian authorities, the developments of the electoral operations. The Steering Committee will be in permanent session in Rome from the opening of the polling stations to the conclusion of the voting operations, in direct contact with the above-mentioned office.